

## A NOTABLE ORCHESTRA.

The Remarkable Organization Which Hans von Bulow Effected at Meiningen.

Hans von Bulow is reported to have resigned his appointment at kappelmeister to that eminent patron of the arts, the duke of Saxe-Meiningen, in order to resume his piano concerts. He does not leave Meiningen, however, without having accomplished an extraordinary work. Says Edouard Hanslick, the famous Vienna critic: "Through Bulow the Meiningen orchestra has become a prominent fact, analogous to the Meiningen theater, which, without any great stars, has created such an extraordinary sensation everywhere by its wonderful ensemble. In its precision down to the smallest detail, the Meiningen orchestra is unsurpassed, we might say unequalled, by any orchestra in the world. The Meiningers will not find many imitators of the way in which they play the accompaniments to Brahms' D minor concerto—more like a great symphony than an accompaniment—without a conductor, while Bulow plays the piano part. A still more astounding performance is that of the terrible fugue from Beethoven's quartet, Op. 133, faultlessly played by all the strings—a wilderness of sound, which puts the best quartet players on their mettle. This is a virtuoso piece, no doubt, and a very enjoyable one, too, but a band that can play it faultlessly may challenge the most powerful opponents.

Where the Meiningers are not able to compete with our Philharmonic band in beauty and fullness of tone, in the glowing warmth and temperament of execution, and in the brilliant effect which numbers give. But we must not forget that Bulow's orchestra counts only forty-eight members whilst our Philharmonic has from eighty to ninety. Then again the quality of the instruments may account for the fact that the Meiningers are wanting in that intense brilliancy and warm coloring which distinguish our Philharmonic orchestra. Bulow's fiddlers are first-rate musicians, but they have got the tremendous go of the Viennese; the double-basses and trombones are capital, the oboes often harsh and shrill, the clarionets and horns good, though not equal to the Viennese masters of these instruments. A good judge will appreciate all the more the effects which Bulow manages to make (by reserve and concentration) with his comparatively small orchestra in passages such as the finale of the C minor symphony and the "Freischuetz" overture.

Bulow, with his spirit of discovery and experiment, has also introduced effective innovations into his orchestra never thought of by other conductors. For instance, the five-stringed double-basses which give the low C, while the usual four-stringed ones only go down to E; then the so-called "Ritter tenor violas," which, being of the stronger build than the usual violas, surpass these in fullness of tone and so lessen the too great contrast between this class of fiddles and violoncellos; finally, the chromatic drums, which can be tuned by a pedal while playing. Another much-discussed innovation of Bulow's, which seems to us of doubtful good, is that his band plays standing. This is in fact going back to an older custom, which may be ascribed to the small space at former amateur concerts, or to the etiquette of courts. The sitting posture of the players at orchestral concerts was probably first introduced in Vienna; at least, in 1784, Dittersdorf (bandmaster to the bishop of Grosswardien) in his autobiography writes: "I had long benches and desks made and introduced the Viennese method of playing sitting, and arranged the orchestra in such a manner that every player faced the audience.—*Philadelphia Times*.

### Can We Afford to be Honest?

Parson Bangle became disgusted with the untruthfulness of mankind, and preached a vigorous sermon in denunciation of society falsehood. He declared that lies told out of politeness were just as wicked as those told with the deliberate intention of deceiving. In fact, these society lies get folks into the habit of lying, and they readily pick up the other kind. The sermon made a great impression. Many of the congregation resolved to reform. Coming out of the church,

Deacon Jones said to Judge Badger, who sits in front of him:

"Judge, I hope you didn't mind my putting my feet under your pew?"

The judge was about to reply, "Oh, certainly not," but he thought of the sermon, and answered:

"I did, though; your old hoofs took up all the room, and were a fearful nuisance."

"Well," said the deacon, "the hair oil you use smells so, it nearly forced us to leave the pew."

They gazed at each other, and just then Mrs. Badger and Miss Jenkins came along. Miss Jenkins had asked, "How do you like my new bonnet?" "Oh, I thought it just love—" replied Mrs. B. and then she thought of the sermon, and continued, "No, I didn't like it. It is a horrid thing, I wouldn't be seen with it." And Miss Jenkins got mad and replied, "Well, if I were you, I'd not wear dirty stockings to church; and if I did, I'd keep 'em out of sight." While these honest conversations were going on, Mrs. Smith had said to the next door neighbor, Mr. Murray, "I hope the crying of our baby last night didn't disturb you?" And Murray replied, "No—that is—yes, I wanted to brain the brat." And then Mrs. Smith called him a wretch, and wept.

Then the clergyman came out and asked young Symonds how he liked the sermon. Symonds said, "It was a grand ef—er—no, parson, it was blamed nonsense."

"Sir?" said the parson, and he drew himself up indignantly. Just then Smith and Murray, after telling each other some truth, clinched, and Deacon Jones was trying to hold Miss Jenkins from scratching Mrs. Badger. It took tremendous efforts to stop the rows and prevent a scandal, and, as it was, everybody went away mad with everybody else. The parson went home and meditated in a gloomy frame of mind for three hours, and finally concluded that society lying was wicked; but he wouldn't preach against it again. It's altogether too handy a sin to be given up.—*Exchange*.

### Mental Disorder and Brain Structure.

There are many mental disorders which are unaccompanied with any recognizable abnormal physical conditions of the brain; that is to say, in which there are no structural lesions of the brain cognizable during life, or which can be satisfactorily demonstrated in the autopsy; and there are many in which the mental alienation can not be fairly traced to any lesion in any other part of the body. The number of these examples may hereafter be found to be smaller than is now known, but for the present the fact is as I have stated. That a functional disturbance of the brain exists in such cases is self-evident; but for aught we know this may be due to some slight molecular, chemical, or vital changes in the nerve-cells of the gray matter of the brain, or of a group of cells, not denoted by any peculiar physical signs during life, and which can leave no possible traces after death. To cause mental derangement, it may be only necessary that these microscopic cells should be temporarily deprived of their normal supply of oxygen through the vascular system; or on the other hand, a slight increase in the supply of the proper nutriment or stimulus may cause the same results. A simple loss of equilibrium, or change of tension in the nerve-cell, may cause delirium. These abnormal physical conditions may be temporary or permanent, but in either case they will probably, in the future as in the past, elude the most careful observation of the physician, the chemist, and the microscopist. Science has calculated the vibrations of the musical chord, and measured the oscillations of a ray of light, but has not estimated the vibrations of the living intellectual nerve-cell, nor analyzed its aura which waits incessantly and instantly upon its will. It has furnished no means, therefore, of determining mathematically when the mysterious organ of mind is out of tune, or why its notes are discordant.

A colored man named Chester sorts all the mail that comes into the Baltimore postoffice during the eight busiest hours of the day. He has been at it nearly fifteen years, and does it with the most wonderful skill and accuracy.

## THE HOUSE OF ORANGE.

A Short Sketch of an Historic Noble Family.

The house of Orange, writes W. T. Hewett in *Harper's Magazine* for March, is inseparably identified with European history in the past three hundred years; to it the independence of the Netherlands is due, and many of the great influences that have affected continental politics. Under the lead of William the Silent liberty of conscience was established against the tyranny of Spain, and republican government instituted in Europe, while under William III. the Stuart dynasty was driven from the English throne, and the vast designs of Louis XIV. successfully resisted.

The family derives its name from the principality of Orange, in Provence, in southern France. In that country, full of the remains of Roman glory, the language of which is still an echo of the Latin, is the city and castle of Orange, where the family had its home one thousand years ago.

The mountains around are gray and stony, burned by the sun and swept by the hot, fierce breath of the sirocco. The hillsides are covered with olive-trees, and the valleys are deep and green, with shaded water-courses.

Above the present city of Orange rises the white walls of the Roman theater, visible for many leagues; and an ancient triumphal arch of remarkable perfection stands close beside the palace of the princes of Orange. Avignon the former home of luxury and excess in the long days of the papal exile, is not far away, while spots sacred to Petrarch and Laura, that can be traced even now in the poet's song, lie just beyond the hill. The rulers of this little independent sovereignty were knights of Charlemagne at Roncevaux and leaders in the crusades.

The epics and songs of the French and Provencal minstrel extol the valor of William of Orange of the Short Nose, who captured the city and its shining marble tower, Glorietta, from the Saracens, who fought against the Moors in Spain, and laid conquered kingdoms at his master's feet, and who died in sanctity as the holy abbot of St. Gellone. A poor monk, it is true, he made, for he ate twice as much meat as the other brethren, and was boisterous when he did not have wine; but he gave them all fair warning when he took the cowl that if they wished to get along well with him they must let him have his own way, and not throw him into a passion, lest a warlike spirit prevail in their peaceful abode.

The rulers of this state grew in wealth and power, and the family name was carried by marriage to the house of Baux and Chalons, and thence to its German branch in the lords of Nassau-Dillenburg. Henry of Nassau, the governor of Charles V., to whom more than all others he owed the imperial crown, acquired the vast possessions of the house of Chalons-Orange; and through his son Rene, his vast estates and titles were bequeathed to his cousin William of Nassau, a lad 11 years of age, who thus became prince of Orange. A count in Germany, he was a prince in France, and heir to a score of titles, dukedoms, counties, and baronies in the Netherlands.

### Hours for Sleep.

The latest authority on the vexed question of sleep, Dr. Malins, says that the proper amount of sleep to be taken by a man, is eight hours. So far as regards city life the estimate is probably correct. Proverbial wisdom does not apply to modern conditions of social existence. "Five (hours) for a man, seven for a woman, and nine for a pig," says one proverb; and a second quoted by Mr. Hazlitt in his English proverbs, declares that "Nature requires five; custom gives (? allows) seven; laziness takes nine, and wickedness eleven." These conclusions were, however, drawn from observation of country life. Physical fatigue is more easily overcome than intellectual. Men, however, who follow any intellectual pursuit are exceptionally fortunate if the processes of restoration occupy less than seven hours. More frequently they extend to eight or nine hours. Kant, I see it stated, took never less than seven hours. Goethe owned to requiring nine. Soldiers and sailors, on the other hand, like laborers, do with a much less quantity.—*New York Commercial Advertiser*.

## Killing Cattle.

The modus operandi of killing and preparing cattle at the stock yards for the market is described by a writer for the *National Live-Stock Journal*, who says: "One man, with a good breach-loading rifle, used at very short range, does the killing. This has been found the surest, quickest, and most humane way of extinguishing the life of cattle by the firms engaged in the business here. One concern uses a heavy hammer to deal the death-blows, and a few years ago 'spearing' was resorted to. This was, in appearance at least, a very barbarous practice. A man armed with a bar of round iron, seven or eight feet long and sharp pointed at one end, would take his place over the narrow chute through which the bullock was driven, and plunge the instrument into the top of his head, just back of the horns, severing the spinal cord. Generally the spear was effective, and caused instant death, but in the case of badly frightened and restive beasts it would frequently go wide of the mark, and maim them in a horrible manner. After the shooting the animals are dragged head foremost by a chain from where they fell into the main building and their throats are cut, the blood being caught, as it flows, in pans. These are allowed to stand until the blood coagulates, when it is removed and dried, for not only the blood, but the horns, bones, entrails, tails and everything except the contents of the stomach and bowels have a commercial value here. The tail does not go with the hide at the stock-yards, but is taken out entirely and has a market value of about 16c. Ox-tail soup is made from them. The intestines are all wanted for sausage castings, and the bones are sold mainly to knife manufacturers. They are worth \$50 to \$55 per ton. There is a demand in some quarters for 'blood sausage,' and the blood not used in this way is sold to sugar refiners. It is worth \$28 per ton. Hogs' blood is used but seldom, except as a fertilizing material. The visitor is always amazed at the incredible short time it takes a practical butcher to remove the hide from a bullock. The whole operation of skinning and dressing is accomplished at the rate of one every ten minutes to each butcher, or about the length of time it takes a farmer to skin the hind leg of a cow to her gambrel joint.

### Work for the Spring.

A later spring we have not known for a long time. The weather still continues cold, though the grass is beginning to turn green. There is yet, however no pasturage for stock. We see the plows are beginning to run. There has been no rain at St. Louis for months. Cisterns are dry and macadamized roads are dusty. Farmers should be ready with strong teams and plenty of good men to put in crops at the earliest moment that the ground is in good order. But by all means have the soil in good condition and well prepared, and the seed the very best. Turn over a new leaf now, and put no more crops in cultivation than can be well put in and receive the best attention. Put the balance of the land in grass, for it is the most profitable crop the farmer raises. At the low prices the cereal crops command, it is better to devote more land to rearing stock or to dairy farming.

The farmer should look ahead and try to raise such crops or such stock as will pay best. Don't do just as your father did unless you are sure that it pays best—but keep up with the spirit of the age. The time has already come when the old fogies are being left behind. The men of progress, of enterprise, of brains are taking the lead, and the laggards have all they can do to keep body and soul together. And every year the difference between the farmers of progressive ideas and the "stand-stills" will be more marked. There are so many farmers, there is so much competition; there is so much overproduction in certain lines, that only the intelligent farmer can succeed. It is on the farm as in the learned professions; there is plenty of room in the upper stories but the ground floors are crowded almost to suffocation. It is brains that carries one to the top. The farmer should bear this in mind, and do all he can to improve his mind, that he may get there.—*Rural World*.